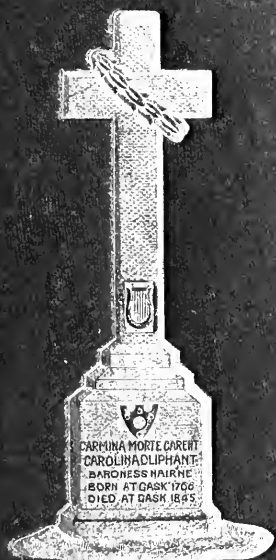


# LADY NAIRNE AND HER SONGS



GEORGE HENDERSON M.A. B.D.



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LADY NAIRNE AND HER SON—FROM A PICTURE  
AT GASK HOUSE.

# LADY NAIRNE AND HER SONGS

BY

REV. GEORGE HENDERSON, M.A., B.D.

MONZIE FREE CHURCH, PERTHSHIRE



THE AULD HOOSE OF GASK—DRAWN BY LADY NAIRNE

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TO

**My Wife and Children:**

MARY, LUCY, AND JAMES



## PREFACE.

---

A DESIRE to make more widely known the gracious character and personality and the beautiful home of Lady Nairne, and to link them to her songs—some of them among the most popular in the language—and the wishes of friends who have heard me lecture on the subject, have prompted me to publish this little book.

Through the kindness of Mrs. Simpson, Lady Nairne's great-grand-niece, I have had the use of original manuscript of songs and letters not hitherto published.

The illustrations are from photographs by the Revd. J. E. Somerville, B.D., of Mentone, specially taken by kind permission of Mr. Kington-Oliphant at Gask House, and they are, for the most part, here reproduced for the first time.

I would acknowledge my obligations to Dr. Rogers' *Life and Songs of the Baroness*

*Nairne*, especially for material supplied in his carefully compiled notes on the Songs.

Mr. Kington-Oliphant of Gask, Lady Nairne's grand-nephew, and author of *Jacobite Lairds of Gask*, has kindly read through my manuscript and made corrections and suggestions, and to Mr. T. S. Omond, M.A., Edinr. and Oxon., formerly Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, I am indebted for a like service.

Mr. David Hutcheson of the Library of Congress, Washington, and Mr. Hew Morrison of The Public Library, Edinburgh, have been good enough to search every Edition of Burns' Poems in their Collections for "The Land o' the Leal"—and while the former was able to find it in only one edition, published in Philadelphia in 1823, the latter writes as we go to press—"I have now examined every Edition of Burns which we have here in the Public Library, and I cannot find in any of them 'The Land o' the Leal.'"

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## LADY NAIRNE AND HER SONGS.



ON a granite memorial cross to Lady Nairne at Gask are inscribed the words: "CARMINA MORTE CARENT"—"Her songs lack death." Few will refuse this tribute to "'The Land o' the Leal," "The Auld Hoose," "'The Rowan Tree," etc. These and many more of her songs will live while Scottish song lives. While, however, her songs are often sung, their gifted authoress is not so well known as she should be, and her songs are often credited to Burns, Hogg, or Tannahill. No doubt this is due to the gentle modesty of Lady Nairne—seen all through her life—which led her to veil her authorship, and in later life to bestow her charities with an unknown hand.

She courted not publicity, but loved the simplicity and quiet beauty of a retired life. Near the end of her life she yielded to the pressure of friends and publishers and allowed her name to go forth with her songs, in some cases fifty years after their composition ; and thus the stream of Scottish song, clear, sunny, sparkling from the mountains, which for half a century had been flowing, was at last traced to its hidden spring. The result, however, of Lady Nairne's incognito for this long period is, that to this day her songs are sung but the name of their authoress remains undiscovered and the facts of her life and character, so interesting in themselves, even apart from her genius, are often too little known.

Lady Nairne, or Carolina Oliphant, as we must first know her, was born in "the Auld Hoose" of Gask, on the banks of the Earn, in Perthshire, on the 16th August, 1766. She belongs therefore, to the period of Robert Burns, which also saw the birth of James

Hogg—the Ettrick Shepherd, and Sir Walter Scott, whom in later life she met and knew. It was a time when the influence of poetry swept over all conditions of life. A welcome reaction had set in to the narrow, cramped, and somewhat mechanical artificiality of the early parts of the eighteenth century—the age of Pope, Gray, and Goldsmith—of Addison, Johnson, Burke, Hume, and Gibbon—when the powers of intellect and imagination found expression in prose and politics rather than in poetry. In the latter half of the century the stream of poetry began with Cowper again to flow, gaining volume in its course, until with Burns, Wordsworth, Byron, and Scott, it rushed on like a great river in flood, overflowing its banks, and carrying all before it. No doubt to some extent the renaissance of poetry had its rise in the intellectual stir of the French Revolution, when great events passed rapidly before men, awakening in their minds new ideas of independence and freedom

and new emotions of wonder, sympathy, and enthusiasm. Some, indeed, think that great movement was itself but the product of the far wider and profounder spirit of the time—when, as Wordsworth says :—

“The whole earth  
The beauty wore of promise : that which sets  
The budding rose above the rose full blown.”

In Scotland the poetry of the eighteenth century took the form of song. Beginning with Allan Ramsay, who stands very much alone, and whose genius lay in pastoral rather than in song, the Scottish lyric movement flowed on through the spirited verses of Bishop Skinner and the poetical precocity of Robert Fergusson to Burns, for whom the way had been not a little prepared by his predecessors. Next came Lady Nairne, the Ettrick Shepherd, and Sir Walter Scott.

Lady Nairne came of a distinguished and powerful Scottish family. In the middle of

the twelfth century the Olifards (as the name was first written) came to Scotland. We find their names in many monastic charters, and in the State papers printed by Rymer, associated with high offices under the Crown. From King Robert the Bruce, William Olifaunt acquired broad lands in Perthshire and became Lord of Gask and Aberdalgie. His son was wedded to Elizabeth, a daughter of King Robert, as is proved by a charter of King David's, bearing date 1364, confirming the lands of Gask to Walter Olyfaunt and to "Elizabeth, his wife, our beloved sister," whereby the lands of Gask became a barony. In 1458 a peerage was granted by James II. to Laurence Oliphant, Dominus de Aberdalgie, who thus became the first and greatest of ten Lords Oliphant. He was the founder of the Greyfriars House at Perth. Two of his grandsons were killed at Flodden—Colin, the Master of Oliphant, and Laurence, Abbot of Inchaffray, the great monastic house

of Strathearn. Colin had two sons—Laurence—the third Lord Oliphant, and William, the founder of the Gask branch.

Soon after the year 1600, the fifth Lord squandered the family inheritance. Gask alone was saved and made over to his cousin. The sixth Lord Oliphant received a new peerage from Charles I. in 1633, and obtained lands in Banffshire. His daughter wedded her cousin, one of the Oliphants of Gask.

In 1689, on the rise of the Jacobite cause, Lord Oliphant was thrown into prison because he had “signed an Association to stand by King James with life and fortune,” and from that time onwards the loyalty of the Oliphant family to the Stuarts never wavered, although it cost them the loss of lands, health, freedom and life. The grandfather and father of Lady Nairne took a leading part in the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 down to the defeat and ruin of the party at Culloden when father and son, after lurking in the hills, took





LAURENCE OLIPHANT, 1743, GRANDFATHER OF LADY NAIRNE.

ship and landed in Sweden whence they made their way to France, while Lady Gask, a daughter of Lord Nairne, and her daughter Janet, remained in Scotland. In 1753 she was able to write to her husband that kind relatives and neighbours had bought back the forfeited estate.

The old Laird of Gask, the grandfather of Lady Nairne, "might well have sat" says Mr. Kington Oliphant, "to Scott for the portrait of the Baron of Bradwardine." His minister was the Rev. William Erskine of Muthill, whose son, Lord Kinnedder, became the intimate friend of Sir Walter Scott "He has," says Mr. Kington Oliphant, "set before us his own likeness, as Antiquarian, Farmer, Soldier and Treasurer; a shrewd Scot, swayed throughout life by the two overmastering principles, Chivalry and Religion; a man, free, open-handed, and great of heart; careless of renown, but most heedful of his good name; willing to starve or to lose his beloved Perthshire

acres rather than tell a lie or become a burden on his King ; ever living in the great Taskmaster's eye. It must be allowed that the one blemish in his character was his leaning to feudalism." He had a fitting companion in Lady Gask who, amid all the trials and difficulties of her life, displayed a calm constancy and a brave cheerfulness.

The father of Lady Nairne died on the first of January, 1792. Of him Mr. Kington Oliphant says—"He seems to have been Chivalry embodied in the shape of man. To the Stuarts he was true as the dial to the sun, when others began to forsake them. In him was found a man's thoroughness, a woman's softness, a child's simplicity. He could never see a poor fellow fallen among thieves and yet pass by on the other side. Hence he was led into some acts from which worldly wisdom would have shrunk. His letter to Rome in 1762 on the subject of the Prince, probably cost him more pain than when he faced the



LAURENCE OLIPHANT, 1725, FATHER OF LADY NAIRNE

"THE AULD LAIRD."



English bayonets at Culloden ; and the reception it met was a warning to him to beware meddling with the Court of King James."

"As master, landlord, husband, faither,  
He does na fail his part in either."

Higher praise cannot be given to him and to his young wife than to say that they were worthy to be the parents of Lady Nairne,

"A soul so charming from a stock so good."

Her lines about her father come to mind:—

"The Auld Laird, the Auld Laird,  
Sae canty, kind and crouse,  
How mony did he welcome to  
His ain wee dear Auld Hoose !"

The birth of Lady Nairne is thus noted in a list of births and deaths from 1688 to 1774 in her father's handwriting—"Carolina, after the King, at Gask, Aug. 16th, 1766." She used to say that her parents had never for-

given her for not being a boy, in which case she would have been named Charles. In the winter of that year there were living under the roof-tree of "The Auld Hoose," the grandfather, father and daughter, whose lives stretch from 1691 to 1845; but soon after the old Laird of Gask died early in 1767—"the greatest man of all the Oliphants that were ever laid in that lowly kirkyard."\*

Lady Nairne's mother belonged to a strong Jacobite family—the Robertsons of Strowan. She was wedded at the early age of fifteen and a half, a lovely maiden—and there were six children of the marriage—four daughters and two sons. Carolina was the third in the family, and when she was only eight years old her mother died, her grandmother, Lady Gask, having already been taken away the same year. Ere she passed away "she talked to her husband," of death and their

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\* "*Jacobite Lairds of Gask.*"



LADY STROWAN, GRANDMOTHER OF LADY NAIRNE.

*(From a Picture at Gask House.)*



future meeting, as if only going a journey for health. "To her children she said, "See who will be the best bairn and stay most with Papa."

The sad and forlorn struggle of Jacobite times was well nigh over ere Lady Nairne was born. Had these songs—so thrilling and patriotic—been sung forty years earlier, how they would have stirred the loyal hearts and inspirited the broken followers of the Pretender. But the home where she was reared was imbued with the Jacobite history and sentiment. It is not surprising, therefore, to find an intense air of reality in Lady Nairne's well-known Jacobite lays, which were written to please a venerated kinsman in his old age. At the ingleside of the Auld Hoose, in her early childhood, she must often have listened, with all a child's wondering and absorbed interest, to her father's thrilling tales of his intercourse with Prince Charlie—of his gallop to Edinburgh with the news of Prestonpans

*He died*

and his encounters with Cope's dragoons on the way—his last words with the Prince when all was over on dark Culloden, and his escape with his father and their kinsman, Lord Nairne, first to Sweden and then to France, where in exile they remained for seventeen years. In the copies of the English Prayer Book which Mr. Oliphant placed in the hands of his children, the names of the exiled family were pasted over those of the reigning one. The King's regard for the Oliphant family is shown in a letter which is preserved at Gask, dated, Florence, 21st February, 1783. It is addressed to Mr. Cowley, Prior of ye English Benedictines at Paris, and runs thus :—

“ It gives me a sensible pleasure ye remembrance of Oliphant of Gask. He is as worthy a subject as I have, and his family never deroged from their principles. Not douting in ye least of ye Son being ye same, make them both know these my sentiments with ye



A black and white photograph showing the disassembled parts of a mummy laid out on a dark, textured surface. The components include two long, slender arms with visible joints, two hands with distinct fingers, two feet with visible toes, and a head. There are also several smaller, rectangular pieces, possibly fragments of clothing or bandages, and a small, dark, circular object. The overall appearance is that of ancient, preserved human remains.

particular esteem that follows a rediness to prove it, if occasion offered.

“Yr. sincere friend,

“CHARLES R.”

Among the relics of Prince Charlie still seen at Gask are his bonnet, the royal brogues, spurs, crucifix, and ribbon of the Garter; also a lock of his hair. This last treasure is referred to in the words:—

“The leddy, too, sae genty,  
There shelter'd Scotland's heir;  
And clipt a lock wi' her ain hand  
Frae his lang yellow hair,”

with a poetic freedom that is scarcely, however, according to fact. For in sending the hair to a great friend in Edinburgh, Lady Nairne says: “I enclose a few of Charlie's hairs, which were given to my grandmother Strowan, the day they were cut, by the man who cut them, one John Stewart, an attendant of the Prince. This is marked on the

paper in her own handwriting. I have often heard her mention this John Stewart, who dressed the Prince's hair." Prince Charlie did, however, breakfast at Gask House, and I have seen a small table there which bears this inscription:—"Charles, Prince of Wales, breakfasted at this table in the low Drawing Room at Gask, September 11th, 1745."

The Laird of Gask remained a staunch Jacobite to the end, even after the death of King Charles. The legend in the family is that when hearing the newspapers read he would never allow George III. and his wife to be called anything but the K. and Q.\* But his Jacobitism did not offend King George, who sent to him this message by the Member for Perthshire:—"Give my compliments—not the compliments of the King of England, but those of the Elector of Hanover—to Mr. Oliphant, and tell him how much I respect

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\* "*Jacobite Lairds of Gask.*"

him for the steadiness of his principles." The story is mentioned by Sir Walter Scott in the preface to *Redgauntlet*, and may have been repeated to him by his friend Erskine, son of the Episcopal minister of Muthill. It was little wonder, coming of such forefathers, that, though by her time the struggle was over and the end had come, Lady Nairne, to please her old Uncle, the Laird of Strowan, was stirred to sing of the fervent loyalty, the chivalrous valour and sacrifice of her countrymen who fought for the Jacobite cause. Her sympathies went forth to all that was good and brave, and beautiful and true. She was just as ready to sing of the devotion and sacrifice of the brave and martyred Scottish Covenanters in such lays as "Pentland Hills" and "The Widow's Lament," etc. To her friend Miss Walker, of Gloucester Place, Edinburgh, she wrote regarding Renwick and Cargill—"There was so much right feeling and heroism

amongst them that they merit a place in Scottish Song.”

The glowing patriotism and heroism of these Jacobite lays awaken a response in every heart. All that is best and deepest in the Jacobite poetry of Scotland is found in the songs of Lady Nairne. The sigh of tender regret, the love vibrating through the hearts of Prince Charlie's followers like the wind in the strings of an æolian harp, the unwavering fealty, the fiery and dauntless hope of victory that knows not defeat—these are the qualities that have given to “Wha'll be King but Charlie?” “Charlie is my Darling,” “The Hundred Pipers,” “He's ower the Hills that I loe weel,” “Will ye no come back again?” a place among the most familiar and popular songs in the language. It is said that when George IV. first heard the tune of “Wha'll be King but Charlie?” he asked the name of the tune, and when informed, by Nathaniel Gow, whose father, Neil Gow, had composed

the air for it, he smiled and asked that it might be repeated. The allusion in the first line of this song, "The news frae Moidart cam' yestreen," is to Prince Charlie's landing on 25th July, 1745, at Lochnanuagh, an arm of the sea dividing the districts of Arisaig and Moidart—and on the 19th of August the Prince unfurled his standard at Glenfinnan. A monument stands in that lonely, lovely spot to mark the place.

The news frae Moidart cam' yestreen,  
Will soon gar mony ferlie ; \*  
For ships o' war hae just come in,  
And landit Royal Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, around him gather,  
Ye're a' the welcomer early ;  
Around him cling wi' a' your kin ;  
For wha'll be King but Charlie ?  
Come thro' the heather, around him gather,  
Come Ronald, come Donald, come a' thegither,  
And crown your rightfu', lawfu' king !  
For wha'll be king but Charlie ?

---

\* Make many wonder.

The Hieland clans, wi' sword in hand,  
     Frae John o' Groat's to Airlie,  
 Hae to a man declared to stand  
     Or fa' wi' Royal Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, etc.

The Lowlands a', baith great an' sma',  
     Wi' mony a lord and laird, hae  
 Declar'd for Scotia's king an' law,  
     An' speir ye wha but Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, etc.

There's ne'er a lass in a' the lan',  
     But vows baith late an' early,  
 She'll ne'er to man gie heart nor han',  
     Wha wadna fecht for Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, etc.

Then here's a health to Charlie's cause,  
     And be't complete an' early ;  
 His very name our heart's blood warms ;  
     To arms for Royal Charlie !

Come thro' the heather, around him gather,  
Ye're a' the welcomer early ;  
Around him cling wi' a' your kin ;  
For wha'll be king but Charlie ?  
Come thro' the heather, around him gather,  
Come Ronald, come Donald, come a' thegither,  
And crown your rightfu', lawfu' king !  
For wha'll be king but Charlie ?

The poetess is not always, however, true to history in her references. In "The Hundred Pipers" the opening reference to the march to Carlisle ha', "Wi' its yetts, its castell, an' a', an' a'," is true, for, having taken Carlisle in the advance to England, Prince Charlie entered Carlisle on 18th November, 1745, on the surrender of the Castle to him, preceded by one hundred pipers. But "the twa thousand brave lads" waded the Esk not in triumph, but in flight, on their return to Scotland—although they did "dance themselves dry to the pibroch's sound." The gay sound of the pipes is heard in this song.

Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a',  
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a' ;  
We'll up an' gie them a blaw, a blaw,  
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a'.  
Oh ! it's owre the Border awa', awa',  
It's owre the Border awa', awa',  
We'll on and we'll march to Carlisle ha',  
Wi' its yetts, its castell, an' a', an' a'.

Oh ! our sodger lads looked braw, looked braw,  
Wi' their tartans, kilts, an' a', an' a',  
Wi' their bonnets, an' feathers, an' glittering gear  
An' pibrochs sounding sweet and clear.  
Will they a' return to their ain dear glen ?  
Will they a' return, our Hieland men ?  
Second-sighted Sandy looked fu' wae,  
And mothers grat when they marched away.

Wi' a hundred pipers, etc.

Or wha is foremost o' a', o' a' ?  
Oh wha does follow the blaw, the blaw ?  
Bonnie Charlie, the king o' us a', hurra !  
Wi' his hundred pipers an' a', an' a'.  
His bonnet an' feather, he's wavin' high,  
His prancin' steed maist seems to fly,

The nor' wind plays wi' his curly hair,  
While the pipers blaw in an unco flare.

Wi' a hundred pipers, etc.

The Esk was swollen, sae red and sae deep,  
But shouther to shouther the brave lads keep ;  
Twa thousand swam owre to fell English ground,  
An' danced themselves dry to the pibroch's sound.  
Dumfounder'd, the English saw—they saw—  
Dumfounder'd, they heard the blaw, the blaw ;  
Dumfounder'd, they a' ran awa', awa',  
From the hundred pipers an' a', an' a'.

Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a',  
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a',  
We'll up and gie them a blaw, a blaw,  
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a'.

What a picture of Scottish chivalry is presented to us in "Charlie is my Darling." No fewer than four versions of this song are known to exist—one by Burns, another by Hogg, a third by Captain Charles Gray, and a fourth—the present one—printed anonymously by Lady Nairne in "The Scottish Minstrel."

'Twas on a Monday morning,  
Right early in the year,  
When Charlie came to our town,  
The young Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling,  
My darling, my darling ;  
Oh, Charlie is my darling,  
The young Chevalier.

As he came marching up the street,  
The pipes play'd loud and clear,  
And a' the folk came running out  
To meet the Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling, etc.

Wi' Hieland bonnets on their heads,  
And claymores bright and clear,  
They came to fight for Scotland's right,  
And the young Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling, etc.

They've left their bonnie Hieland hills,  
Their wives and bairnies dear,  
To draw the sword for Scotland's lord,  
The young Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling, etc.

Oh, there were mony beating hearts,  
And mony a hope and fear,  
And mony were the prayers put up  
For the young Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling,  
My darling, my darling,  
Oh, Charlie is my darling,  
The young Chevalier.

In “He’s owre the hills ayont Dunblane,” the poetess is gazing towards the farthest of the Ochils she can see rising above Dunblane, about twenty miles from Gask. As a sample of the loyal trust of Scottish hearts in their Prince, take “Will ye no come back again?” in every line of which is felt the throb of longing love:—

Bonnie Charlie’s now awa’,  
Safely owre the friendly main ;  
Mony a heart will break in twa,  
Should he ne’er come back again.

Will ye no come back again ?  
Will ye no come back again ?  
Better lo’ed ye canna be,  
Will ye no come back again ?

Ye trusted in your Hieland men,  
They trusted you, dear Charlie ;  
They kent you hiding in the glen,  
Your cleadin' was but barely.

Will ye no, etc.

English bribes were a' in vain,  
An' e'en tho' puirer we may be ;  
Siller canna buy the heart  
That beats aye for thine and thee.

Will ye no, etc.

We watched thee in the gloamin' hour,  
We watched thee in the mornin' grey ;  
Tho' thirty thousand pounds they'd gi'e,  
Oh, there was nane that wad betray.

Will ye no, etc.

Sweet's the laverock's note and lang,  
Lilting wildly up the glen ;  
But aye to me he sings ae sang—  
Will ye no come back again ?

Will ye no come back again ?  
Will ye no come back again ?  
Better lo'ed ye canna be,  
Will ye no come back again ?





VISTA FROM FRONT OF GASK HOUSE.

There the most sincere Jacobite sentiment finds expression in verse of rare tenderness and musical sweetness. We sing these songs, for, though the cause was worthless, the sentiment is noble, chivalrous, and self-sacrificing. As Burns tells us :—

“The heart’s aye,  
The part aye  
That maks us richt or wrang.”

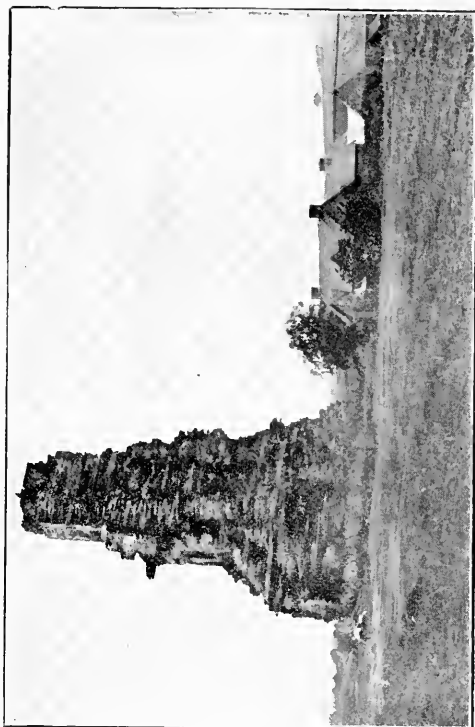
The element of *nature* enters into Lady Nairne’s poetry. The home of the poetess was in Bonnie Strathearn, looking down upon the wide and spacious and richly wooded strath through which flows the winding Earn—with the wavy line of the Ochils to the South, while to the North rises the grand range of the Grampians, and to the West are seen the Aberuchils and Ben Voirlich. The picturesque house of Gask stands high above the Earn, not far from Dunning and Auchterarder, both of which were burnt by the

Jacobites on their retreat after the '15. A burn wanders through fine old trees and quaintly fashioned pleasure ground. Side by side with Gask were the beautiful estates of the Graemes, Murrays, and Drummonds, with whom the Oliphants were in steady alliance. Her soul drank in the beauty of her surroundings, and her genius reflected it in song. We shall expect to find the impress of those scenes around her home upon her poetry. It is reflected in "The Banks of the Earn," where she sings thus :—

The spreading hills, the shading trees,  
High waving in the morning breeze,  
The wee Scots rose that softly blows,  
Sweet Earn's vale adorning.

Flow on, sweet Earn, row on, sweet Earn,  
Joy to all thy bonny braes !  
Spring's sweet buds aye first do blow  
Where thy winding waters flow.





RUIN OF GASCON HA.

Thro' thy banks which wild flowers border,  
Freely wind and proudly flow,  
Where Wallace wight fought for the right,  
And gallant Grahams are lying low.

The last two lines may refer to Gascon Hall, on the Earn, where Wallace sought shelter, and to Aberuthven, where the Graemes are buried. The ruin of Gascon Hall still stands in the Parish of Trinity-Gask, on the north side of the Earn, near to Orchard Farm.

In "Adieu to Strathearn" she says:—

Strathearn, oh! how shall I quit thy sweet groves?

and then she warbles on:—

Sweet scene of my childhood, delight of my  
youth,

The far-winding waters no more I must see;  
The high waving bowers, thy gay woodland  
flowers,

They wave now, they bloom now, no longer  
for me.

Again, she sings in "Songs of my native land":—

Entwined with my youthful days,  
Wi' the bonny banks and braes,  
Where the windin' burnie strays  
Murmuring near.

"The Rowan Tree," round which her memory lingers, and which she so lovingly describes, recalls for her the scenes of childhood that cluster round it:—

O rowan tree, O rowan tree, thou'lt aye be dear  
to me,  
Entwined thou art wi' mony ties o' hame and  
infancy.  
Thy leaves were aye the first o' spring, thy  
flow'rs the simmer's pride ;  
There was nae sic a bonny tree in a' the countrie  
side.

Oh ! Rowan Tree.

How fair wert thou in simmer time, wi' a' thy  
clusters white,  
How rich and gay thy autumn dress, wi' berries  
red and bright !

On thy fair stem were many names, which now  
nae mair I see,  
But they're engraven on my heart—forgot they  
ne'er can be !

O ! Rowan Tree.

We sat aneath thy spreading shade, the bairnies  
round thee ran,  
They pu'd thy bonny berries red, and necklaces  
they strang ;  
My mother ! oh ! I see her still, she smiled our  
sports to see,  
Wi' little Jeanie on her lap an' Jamie at her  
knee !

Oh ! Rowan Tree.

Oh ! there arose my father's prayer, in holy  
evening's calm,  
How sweet was then my mother's voice singing  
the Martyr's psalm !  
Now a' are gane ! we meet nae mair aneath the  
Rowan Tree ;  
But hallowed thoughts around thee twine o'  
hame and infancy.

Oh ! Rowan Tree.

Another influence felt by her genius must have been that of Robert Burns. Perhaps it is scarcely well enough remembered that Burns was really caught in the stream of Scottish Song which began to flow early in the century. The enthusiasm for song writing in the vernacular had spread over the country ere Burns appeared, and his genius seized and appropriated, in the songs that had appeared, all that was good and true to nature. Undoubtedly the conditions of the time were favourable to his genius. He owed much to Allan Ramsay, for he it was that in his "Gentle Shepherd" revealed the beauty and dignity of rural life. Robert Fergusson, who died in 1774 at the early age of twenty-four, deserves always to be associated with Burns, not only because Burns erected a monument over his grave on which he inscribed a warm eulogy in praise of the brilliant youth, but because from his youthful predecessor our great Scottish poet derived

inspiration and suggestion at a time when his genius needed both. "The Holy Fair," "The Cottar's Saturday Night," and "The Mouse," could only have been written by Burns; but there are hints and suggestions in them that may be traced to the poetry of Fergusson.

With less risk of overshadowing, Lady Nairne may be placed alongside of James Hogg, "The Ettrick Shepherd," who occupies nearly the same period, 1770—1835. In Hogg we find rough humour and tender sentiment combined strangely, but he was a true poet, and some of his songs, especially "Kilmeny," may be ranked with Lady Nairne's. The poetry of Burns had appeared, and she was among the first to recognise his genius and to mark in his singing the strain of a loftier, purer minstrelsy than in the common ballads of the time. It would not be fair to compare the songs of Lady Nairne with those of our greatest Scottish poet, yet it may be

said for her songs what cannot always be said for those of Burns, that they are never defiled by any taint of impurity, and that their genius ever breathes the pure air of heaven. "There is," says Professor Masson, "a real moral worth in them all, and all have that genuine characteristic of a song which consists of an inner tune preceding and inspiring the words, and coiling the words, as it were, out of the heart along with it."

Her songs have often been and still are attributed to Burns. From him she seems to have taken the idea of trying to purify the springs of Scottish song—for she marked how the Ayrshire bard was adapting new verse to tunes which had been sung to coarse and worthless words. She resolved to aid in the purifying of national song, and her first attempt, about the year 1793, when Burns was at the height of his fame, was on a new version of a song called "The Pleughman," which her brother Laurence sang at a dinner given to

the tenantry at Gask. But the name of the authoress was not known for half a century. Its cheery notes ring like a lark's song in the open air midway between sunny skies and green fields, and over all the blessing of heaven. It runs thus:—

There's high and low, there's rich and poor,  
There's trades and crafts eneuch, man ;  
But east and west his trade's the best,  
That kens to guide the pleugh, man.

Then come, weel speed my pleughman lad,  
And hey, my merry pleughman ;  
Of a' the trades that I do ken,  
Commend me to the pleughman.

His dreams are sweet upon his bed,  
His cares are light and few, man ;  
His mother's blessin's on his head,  
That tents her weel, the pleughman.

Then come, weel speed, etc.

The lark sae sweet, that starts to meet  
The morning fresh and new, man ;

Blythe tho' she be, as blythe is he  
That sings as sweet, the pleughman.

Then come, weel speed, etc.

All fresh and gay, at dawn of day,  
Their labours they renew, man ;  
Heaven bless the seed and bless the soil,  
And Heaven bless the pleughman.

Then come, well speed, etc.

Hard by Gask House is the village of Clathy, where dwelt a peasantry strongly attached to the Gask family. Lady Nairne mingled freely with them in intercourse and in sympathy with their joys and sorrows. Their dialect lives in her songs, as well as their customs and snatches of current minstrelsy, and her songs breathe their simple, natural, open-air, rural life.

Her earlier songs are rich in the gift of *humour*, which, even in her later and more serious years, never left her. These earlier

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poems are, in point of humour, in the first rank. Lady Nairne has a keen eye for the humorous side of human nature, and the humorous points in the life and character of those among whom she lived are lovingly depicted in many a bubbling, rippling verse. There is a humour that is often largely the product of the author's own invention—for example, that of George Eliot, whose witty sayings are reproduced by her characters. But the humour of Lady Nairne and of Sir Walter Scott originates in the characters themselves, and is discovered by the magic touch of the writer. Lady Nairne's humour is always kindly and genial; it does not satirize nor detract from the worth of those whom she depicts, as if the writer were far above her subjects and were looking down upon them with contemptuous good-nature. With "The Laird o' Cockpen" we are all familiar, an example of vivid humorous ballad portraiture which it would be hard to excel.

Two verses are sometimes added which go far towards spoiling the conception and finish of the song—said to have come from the inconsiderate pen of Miss Ferrier, the novelist, an intimate friend of Sir Walter Scott. The M'Leish named in the second verse is not the parish minister of Gask, often mentioned by her father, who in 1746 refused to pray for the family, and sought to bring on them the vengeance of the Duke of Cumberland.

The laird o' Cockpen, he's proud an' he's great,  
His mind is ta'en up wi' things o' the State ;  
He wanted a wife, his braw house to keep,  
But favour wi' wooin' was fashious to seek.

Down by the dyke-side a lady did dwell,  
At his table head he thocht she'd look well,  
M'Leish's ae dochter o' Clavers-ha' Lea,  
A penniless lass wi' a lang pedigree.

His wig was weel pouter'd and as gude as new,  
His waistcoat was white, his coat it was blue ;  
He put on a ring, a sword, and cock'd hat,  
And wha could refuse the laird wi' a' that ?

He took the grey mare, and rade cannily,  
An' rapped at the yett o' Clavers-ha' Lea ;  
"Gae tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben,—  
She's wanted to speak to the Laird o' Cockpen."

Mistress Jean she was makin' the elder-flower  
wine ;  
"An' what brings the laird at sic a like time ?"  
She put aff her apron and on her silk gown,  
Her mutch wi' red ribbons, and gaed awa' down.

An' when she cam' ben he bowed fu' low,  
An' what was his errand he soon let her know ;  
Amazed was the laird when the lady said "Na,"  
And wi' a laigh curtsie she turned awa'.

Dumfounder'd was he, nae sigh did he gie,  
He mounted his mare—he rade cannily ;  
An' aften he thought, as he gaed through the glen,  
She's daft to refuse the laird o' Cockpen.

Take as an illustration of her humour, so simple and natural, so kindly and true, "John Tod." In a letter to Miss Walker, Lady Nairne says, in reference to this song—"As for 'John Tod'—I think the verse beginning

‘Saw ye little John, etc.,’ should be omitted, as it belongs to a different set of words, and alludes to a boy, and the good shoes hardly suit the tatters which are picturesque upon the whole.” The hero of this song, by the way, is supposed to be the Rev. John Tod, minister of Ladykirk, Berwickshire, who married a daughter of Sir Patrick Home, Bart., whose grandson succeeded to the estate of Wedderburn, with whose family Lady Nairne was intimate. How deftly drawn is this picture.

He’s a terrible man, John Tod, John Tod,  
He’s a terrible man, John Tod.  
    He scolds in the house,  
    He scolds at the door,  
He scolds on the vera hie road, John Tod,  
He scolds on the vera hie road.

The weans a’ fear John Tod, John Tod,  
The weans a’ fear John Tod ;  
    When he’s passing by  
    The mithers will cry,  
“He’s an ill wean,” John Tod, John Tod,  
“He’s an ill wean,” John Tod.

The callants a' fear John Tod, John Tod,  
The callants a' fear John Tod ;  
    If they steal but a neep  
    The laddie he'll whip,  
And its unco weel done o' John Tod, John Tod,  
Its unco weel done o' John Tod.

An' saw ye nae wee John Tod, John Tod ?  
O saw ye nae wee John Tod ?  
    His bannet was blue,  
    His shoon maistly new,  
And weel does he keep the kirk road, John Tod,  
O weel does he keep the kirk road.

How is he fendin', John Tod, John Tod ?  
How is he wendin' John Tod ?  
    He's scourin' the land,  
    Wi' his rung in his hand,  
An' the French wadna frichten John Tod, John  
    Tod,  
An' the French, wadna frichten John Tod.

Ye're sun-brint and batter'd, John Tod, John  
    Tod,  
Ye're tautit and tatter'd, John Tod,

Wi' your auld strippit coul,  
 Ye look maist like a fule,  
 But there's *nous* i' the lining, John Tod, John  
 Tod,  
 But there's *nous* i' the lining, John Tod.

He's weel respeckit, John Tod, John Tod,  
 He's weel respeckit, John Tod ;  
     He's a terrible man,  
     But we'd a' gae wrang,  
 If e'er he sud leave us, John Tod, John Tod,  
 If e'er he sud leave us, John Tod.

The pawky, wise humour of "The Twa  
 Doos"—shaking their heads over the un-  
 thinking ways of young humanity—is inimit-  
 able.

There were twa doos sat in a dookit ;  
 Twa wise-like birds, and round they luiket ;  
 An' says the ane unto the ither,  
 "What dae ye see, my good brither ?"

"I see some pickles o' gude strae,  
 An' wheat some fule has thrown away ;  
 For a rainy day they should be boukit."  
 Sae down they flew frae aff their dookit.

The snaw will come an' cour the grund,  
Nae grains o' wheat will then be fund ;  
They pickt a' up, an' a' were boukit,  
Then round an' round again they luiket.

O lang he thoct an' lang he luiket,  
An' aye his wise-like head he shook it ;  
" I see, I see, what ne'er should be,  
I see what's seen by mair than me.

" Wae's me, there's thochtless, lang Tam Grey,  
Aye spending what he's no to pay ;  
In wedlock, to a taupie hookit,  
He's taen a doo, but has nae dookit.

" When we were young it was nae sae ;  
Nae rummelgumshion folk now hae ;  
What gude for them can e'er be luiket,  
When folk tak' doos that hae nae dookit? "

Again take the strain of gentle wisdom  
through which there runs a fine vein of com-  
mon-sense—

Saw ye ne'er a lanely lassie,  
Thinkin', gin she were a wife,  
The sun o' joy wad ne'er gae down,  
But warm and cheer her a' her life ?

Saw ye ne'er a weary wifie,  
Thinkin' gin she were a lass,  
She wad aye be blithe and cheery,  
Lightly as the day wad pass ?

Wives and lasses, young and aged,  
Think na on each other's state :  
Ilka ane it has its crosses ;  
Mortal joy was ne'er complete.  
Ilka ane it has its blessings ;  
Peevish dinna pass them by ;  
But like choicest berries, seek them  
Though amang the thorns they lie.

The "pretty Miss Car" of early youth became in later years "The Flower of Strath-earn"—beautiful, vivacious, and good ; the pride of her house, the fondly admired of many lovers. Was "Jamie the Laird" one of her luckless suitors who found his way into this song ?

Send a horse to the water, ye'll no mak' him  
drink ;  
Send a fule to the college, ye'll no mak' him  
think ;

Send a craw to the singin', an' still he will craw ;  
An' the wee laird had nae rummelgumpshion ava',  
Yet he is the pride o' his fond mother's e'e,  
In body or mind nae faut can she see ;  
"He's a fell clever lad, an' a bonnie wee man,"  
Is aye the beginnin' an' end o' her sang.

An' oh ! she's a haverin' Luckie, I trow,  
An' oh ! she's a haverin' Luckie, I trow ;  
"He's a fell clever lad, an' a bonnie wee man,"  
Is aye the beginnin' an' end o' her sang.

His legs they are bow'd, his e'en they do glee,  
His wig, while's it's aff, an' when on, it's ajee ;  
He's braid as he's lang—an' ill-faured is he,  
A dafter like body I never did see.  
An' yet for this cratur, she say's I am deein',  
When that I deny, she's fear't at my leein' ;  
Obliged to pit up wi' this sair defamation,  
I'm liken to dee wi' grief and vexation.

An' oh ! she's a haverin' Luckie, etc.

An' her clish-ma clavers gang a' thro' the toon,  
An' the wee lairdie trows I'll hang or I'll droun ;  
Wi' his gawkie-like face, yestreen he did say,  
"I'll maybe tak' you, for Bess I'll no hae,

Nor Mattie, nor Effie, nor lang-legged Jeanie,  
Nor Nellie, nor Katie, nor skirlin' wee Beenie."  
I stappit my ears, ran aff in a fury—  
I'm thinkin' to bring them afore judge an' jury.

For oh ! what a randy auld Luckie is she, etc.

Frien's ! gie your advice ! I'll follow your counsel,  
Maun I speak to the Provost, or honest Toun  
Council ?

Or the writers, or lawyers, or doctors ? now say ;  
For the law o' the Luckie I shall an' will hae.  
The hale toun at me are jibin' and jeerin' ;  
For a leddy like me, it's really past bearin' ;  
The Luckie maun now hae done wi' her claverin',  
For I'll no pit up wi' her, nor her haverin' !

For oh ! she's a randy, I trow, I trow ;  
For oh ! she's a randy, I trow, I trow ;  
"He's a fell clever lad, an' a bonnie wee man,"  
Is aye the beginnin' an' end o' her sang.

From her graphic pen comes in her earlier years the following sprightly sketch of the  
"County Meeting." She herself excelled in  
the Terpsichorean art, her skill in which won

the admiration of Neil Gow, that king of Scottish fiddlers.

Ye're welcome, leddies, ane and a',  
Ye're welcome to our County Ha';  
Sae weel ye look when buskit braw,  
    To grace our County Meeting!  
An' gentlemen, ye're welcome, too,  
In waistcoats white and tartan too,  
Gae seek a partner, mak' your bow,  
    Syne dance our County Meeting.

Ah, weel dune now, there's auld Sir John,  
Wha aye maun lead the dancin' on,  
An' Leddy Bet, wi' her turban prim,  
An' wi' bit velvet 'neath her chin.  
See how they nimbly, nimbly go!  
While youngsters follow in a row,  
Wi' mony a belle, an' mony a beau,  
    To dance our County Meeting.

There's the Major, and his sister too,  
He in the bottle green, she in the blue;  
(Some years sin' syne that gown was new,  
    At our County Meeting.)

They are a worthy, canty pair,  
An' unco proud o' their nephew Blair ;  
O' sense, or siller, he's nae great share,  
    Though he's the King o' the Meeting.

An' there's our Member, and Provost Whig,  
Our Doctor in his yellow wig,  
Wi' his fat wife, wha taks a jig  
    Aye at our County Meeting.  
Miss Betty, too, I see her there,  
Wi' her sonsy face, and bricht red hair,  
Dancin' till she can dance nae mair  
    At our County Meeting.

There's beauty Bell, wha a' surpasses,  
An' heaps o' bonny country lasses ;  
Wi' the heiress o' the Gowden Lea,  
    Fo'k say she's unco dorty—  
Lord Bawbee, aye, he's lookin' there,  
An' sae is the Major, and Major's heir,  
Wi' the Laird, the Shirra, and mony mair,  
    I could reckon them to forty.

See Major O'Neill has got her hand,  
An' in the dance they've ta'en their stand ;  
(Impudence comes frae Paddy's land,  
    Say the lads o' our County Meeting.)

But ne'er ye fash ! Gang through the reel,—  
The country dance, ye dance sae weel—  
An' ne'er let waltz or dull quadrille  
    Spoil our County Meeting.

Afore we end, strike up the spring,  
O' Thulichan and Hieland-Fling,  
The Haymakers, and Bumpkin fine !  
    At our County Meeting.  
Gow draws his bow, folk haste away  
While some are glad and some are wae,  
A' blithe to meet some ither day,  
    At our County Meeting.

As a final example of her power as a true humourist and as a picture of the festivity of her time let us take "Kitty Reid's House," a favourite resort of the County lairds, whose hostess was one, Kitty Reid, sketched in the song, at the moment when the collapse of the building spread dire confusion amongst the guests.

Hech ! hey ! the mirth that was there,  
    The mirth that was there,  
    The mirth that was there ;

Hech ! how ! the mirth that was there,  
In Kitty Reid's house on the green, Jo,  
There was laughin', an' singin' an' dancin' an' glee  
In Kitty Reid's house, in Kitty Reid's house,  
There was laughin' an' singin' an' dancin' an' glee  
In Kitty Reid's house on the green, Jo.

Hech ! hey ! the fright that was there,  
The fright that was there,  
The fright that was there,  
Hech ! how ! the fright that was there,  
In Kitty Reid's house on the green, Jo.  
The light glimmer'd in thro' a crack i' the wa',  
An' a' body thocht the lift it would fa',  
An' lads and lasses they soon ran awa'  
Frae Kitty Reid's house on the green, Jo.

Hech ! hey ! the dule that was there,  
The dule that was there,  
The dule that was there,  
The birds an' beasts it wauken'd them a',  
In Kitty Reid's house on the green, Jo.  
The wa' gaed a hurly and scatter'd them a',  
The piper, the fiddler, auld Kitty, an' a',  
The kye fell a routin', the cocks they did craw,  
In Kitty Reid's house on the green, Jo.

As showing her power of sympathy in drawing from the life, we have the song "Caller Herrin',"—a lyric gem of the first water—which was composed for the benefit of Nathaniel Gow, a son of Neil Gow, and given to him anonymously by Lady Nairne's Edinburgh friend. In the letter enclosing the song to her friend, Lady Nairne wrote :—"If it is to be any use to Nathaniel, perhaps it should be dedicated to the Duchess of Athole."

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
They're bonnie fish and halesome farin' ;  
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',  
New drawn frae the Forth ?

When ye were sleepin' on your pillows,  
Dreamed ye aught o' our puir fellows,  
Darkling as they faced the billows,  
A' to fill the woven willows ?

Buy my caller herrin',  
New drawn frae the Forth.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
 They're no brocht here without brave darin';  
 Buy my caller herrin',  
 Haul'd through wind and rain.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin', etc.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
 Oh, ye may ca' them vulgar farin',  
 Wives and mithers maist despairin',  
 Ca' them lives o' men.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? etc.

When the creel o' herrin' passes,  
 Ladies, clad in silk and laces,  
 Gather in their braw pelisses,  
 Cast their heads and screw their faces.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? etc.,

Caller herrin's no got lichtlie,  
 Ye can trip the spring fu' tichtlie,  
 Spite o' tauntin', flauntin', flingin',  
 Gow has set ye a' a-singin'.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? etc.

Neebour wives, now tent my tellin' :  
When the bonnie fish ye're sellin',  
At ae word be in your dealin'—  
Truth will stand when a' thing's failin'.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
They're bonnie fish and halesame farin' ;  
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',  
New drawn frae the Forth ?

Less known is the tender little tale, told with touching simplicity, of "The Mitherless Lammie." The original MS., which we here reproduce, was found among the papers of Miss Helen Walker.

The *pathos* of Lady Nairne's songs touches a still deeper chord in the human heart. It is deeply tinged, as all true pathos must be, with the tender and radiant hope of her religion. Pathos does not truly affect the human heart unless it bears with it an alleviating element of joy. The pathos of a deathbed is best felt when the overshadowing cloud is shot through

and through by the sunbeams of a sacred and a heavenly joy. Nowhere is this seen, or rather felt, more deeply than in "The Land o' the Leal," which was composed in 1798, or late in 1797, in her 32nd year, on the death of the baby of her friend Mrs. Campbell Colquhoun, of Killermont. Mrs. Colquhoun was the daughter of the Rev. William Erskine, minister of the Episcopal Church at Muthill, and lived with her brother, an advocate in Edinburgh, who afterwards became Lord Kinneder. She was much admired by Sir Walter Scott, and, it is said, wooed by him; but the successful wooer was Archibald Campbell Colquhoun, Sheriff of Perthshire, afterwards Lord Advocate and Lord Clerk Register. A child was born to them, and after a year with them it was taken from the fond embrace of the parents. Mrs. Colquhoun's heart felt this sorrow deeply and keenly, and her early friend, Carolina Oliphant, sought to console the young mother by the tender strain of the

other life and the better country, which is sung by the mother in this song as if she were soon to be in the land o' the leal, now nearer and dearer to her because her child is there. The authoress pledged her friend to secrecy, and for nearly half a century the authorship remained unknown. It is little wonder that this poem of well nigh perfect beauty, appearing only a short time after Burns' death, should be attributed to him as his last song to his wife, the name "Jean" being substituted for "John." At last, in her old age, Lady Nairne solved the question of authorship by writing as follows:—" 'The Land o' the Leal' is a happy rest for the mind in this dark pilgrimage. . . . O yes, I was young then, I wrote it merely because I liked the air so much, and I put these words to it, never fearing questions as to authorship. However a lady would know and took it down, and I hadn't Sir Walter's art of denying. I was present when it was asserted that Burns com-

posed it on his deathbed, and that he had it *Jean* instead of *John*, but the parties could not decide why it never appeared in his works, as his last song should have done. I never answered." Besides this statement of Lady Nairne, we have the testimony of her niece, Miss Steuart, and of her intimate friend, Miss Walker, that "The Land o' the Leal," was written by Lady Nairne in her earlier years. Such modesty, beautiful as it is in Lady Nairne, is much to be regretted, for it has made it difficult to settle whether some songs attributed to her are really hers, and still more difficult to settle the correct version of songs that are known to be her own. At the same time it is to some extent true, that in those days it was considered *infra dignitate* for a lady of high position in Society to write for publication. Lady Anne Lindsay refused to attach her name to "Auld Robin Gray." We need be in no doubt, however, of the true version of the "Land o' the Leal," for the

original MS. is in existence and the facsimile has already appeared in print,\* and is here reproduced. The pathos of this song is like the sigh of a gentle wind in the summer air.

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\* "*Harp of Perthshire*," by Robert Ford. In his preface Mr. Ford writes :—"To Miss Steuart, the sole surviving niece of Lady Nairne who, at the advanced age of 98, is happily still hale and well, we have to express our special thanks. It is to her kindly disposition that the reader is indebted for the facsimile of the original MS. of 'The Land o' the Leal.'" Miss Steuart died two years ago.

Mr. David Hutcheson (himself a Scotchman), Assistant Librarian of the Library of Congress, Washington, writes me as follows :—"I have had all the editions of Burns's Poems in our collection carefully examined, and only in one does the 'Land o' the Leal' appear credited to Burns. The edition is one published by B. Chapman, in Philadelphia, in 1823. The following note appears at the end of the poem—"The Land o' the Leal" is supposed to be the last song by Burns and addressed to his wife.' It is printed in the 'Kilmarnock Popular Edition' of 1871, among the pieces attributed to, but not by Burns."

I'm wearin' awa', John,  
Like snaw when it's thaw, John,  
I'm wearin' awa'  
To the land o' the leal.

There's nae sorrow there, John,  
There's neither cauld nor care, John,  
The day's aye fair  
In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn's there, John,  
She was baith gude and fair, John,  
And oh ! we grudged her sair  
To the land o' the leal.

But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,  
And joy is comin' fast, John,  
The joy that's aye to last  
In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear's that joy was bought, John,  
Sae free the battle fought, John,  
That sinfu' man e'er brought  
To the land o' the leal.

And I'll welcome you  
To the land of the dead

O my your glories as I know  
My more tangs to be free I know  
And angels beacons are  
To the land of the dead.

Now have ye ever my pain I know  
That world's cares are vain I know  
We meet & well, be fair  
In the land of the dead

THE LAND O' THE LEAL.

I'm a man o' a John  
Like men when o' the John  
I'm a man o' a John  
The land o' the leal  
There's nae sorrow there John  
There's neither could nor care John  
The day's age fair in the land o' the leal  
Our bonny bairns there John  
The warld's guid & fair John  
And O we guidged her's sair  
To the land o' the leal  
But sorrow's not a man's part John  
And joy is coming fast John  
The joy that's aye to last  
In the land o' the leal.  
Reached ye hae & love John  
Your day it's well near there John  
And I'll welcome you  
To the land o' the leal  
O dry your ghastrin as John  
My some lumps o' the free John  
And angels be there  
To the land o' the leal.  
Nae fear ye need my ain John  
This warld's cares are vain John  
We'll meet & will be fair  
In the land o' the leal

---

Oh ! dry your glist'ning e'e, John,  
My soul lang's to be free, John,  
And angels beckon me  
To the land o' the leal.

Noo, haud ye leal and true, John,  
Your day it's weel near through, John,  
And I'll welcome you  
To the land o' the leal.

Noo, fare-ye-weel, my ain John,  
This warld's cares are vain, John,  
We'll meet, and we'll be fain  
In the land o' the leal.

The verse " Sae dear's that joy was bought, John," seems to have been added at a later period, for in the original MS. referred to above it does not appear.

The reputation of Lady Nairne as a song-writer rests safely on this lyric which, in the tenderness of a pathos lit by the rays of an endless joy, and in the music and simplicity of its form, may be said to stand almost alone.

About this time occurred the death of Lady

Nairne's brother Charles—and soon after came the crisis in her religious experience. On a visit to the old castle of Murthly, the seat of Sir John Stewart, Bart., near Dunkeld, a few words were said at family worship upon the words: "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." During the day she could not be found, and when she appeared in the evening her face bore marks of weeping, but her eye was brightened with a holy joy. She had closed with the Saviour's invitation and never afterward doubted.

While her fine gifts and admirable natural character became mellowed and softened by her religion, yet she ever retained her love of song and music, and her sense of the humorous and mirthful in human life. Her chosen maxim was, "Religion is a walking and not a talking concern." After her death, her maid, in answer to the question, "But had your mistress no faults?" said: "My mistress came as near to an angel as the weakness of

human nature would allow; the only thing amiss I could see in her was that she disliked my marrying or otherwise leaving her."

Lady Nairne was not a hymn-writer, otherwise we should have been singing hymns rising out of her rich and varied Christian experience. Her later poems are more markedly influenced by her religion, especially in their longings for the near and eternal future; but, indeed, from the first her efforts are high-toned and spring from a desire to purify our national songs. There is not one of her songs that leaves on the hearer any other impression than that which is thoroughly wholesome and good, and in the later songs, the notes of Christian hope and joy ring clearly. No poet has touched these notes more truly and tenderly than Lady Nairne. They are reached without effort or strain, for the soul of the poetess lives amid the harmonies of heaven. In "Gude Nicht an' Joy be wi' you a'," she sings thus—

The best o' joys maun hae an end,  
The best o' friends maun part, I trow ;  
The langest day will wear away,  
And I maun bid fareweel to you.  
The tear will tell when hearts are fu' ;  
For words, gin they hae sense ava',  
They're broken, faltering and few ;  
Gude nicht and joy be wi' you a'.

O we hae wandered far and wide,  
O'er Scotia's lands o' firth and fell,  
And mony a simple flower we've pu'd,  
And twined it wi' the heather bell.  
We've ranged the dingle and the dell,  
The cot-house and the baron's ha' ;  
Now we maun tak' a last farewell,  
Gude nicht and joy be wi' you a'.

My harp, fareweel, thy strains are past,  
Of gleefu' mirth, and heartfelt wae ;  
The voice of song maun cease at last,  
And minstrelsy itsel' decay.  
But oh ! whare sorrow canna win,  
Nor parting tears are shed ava,  
May we meet neighbour, kith and kin,  
And joy for aye be wi' us a' !

The same notes are struck with unerring touch in the following song (now published in this form for the first time) which, in the original as it has come into our hands is headed "Parody of 'I'm come from a happy land.'" The gifted authoress of *The Scottish Songstress*, a great grand-niece of Lady Nairne's, thinks that she may have caught the idea from the hymn, "There is a Happy Land," repeated to her by the late Mrs. Barbour. The other suggestion seems to us, however, the more likely one, that this is another version of "Songs of my Native Land." Here, like the lark, her muse rises from earth and sings the sweeter and clearer the higher it soars.

I'm bound for a happy land  
Where care is unknown ;  
I am bound for a happy land  
Where love reigns alone.  
Come, come and fly with me,  
Love's banquet waits for thee,  
Joy, joy and extasy for ever more.

Weary pilgrims there have met,  
Their wanderings o'er ;  
There the slave no more oppressed,  
Hails freedom's shore.  
Sin will there no more deface,  
Sickness, pain and sorrow cease,  
Ending in eternal peace,  
And songs of joy.

Strains of my native land,  
That thrill the soul ;  
Pouring the magic of your soft control,  
Oft has your minstrelsy  
Soothed the pang of misery ;  
Winging swift thought away  
To realms on high.

There where the seraphs sing  
In cloudless day ;  
There where their higher praise,  
The ransomed pay—  
Hymns of the happy land,  
Chanted by the heavenly band ;  
Who—who can understand,  
How sweet ye be !

In “Farewell, O Farewell !” she sings with unquestioning hope thus :—

Fareweel, O fareweel !  
My heart it is sair ;  
Fareweel, O fareweel !  
I'll meet him nae mair.

Lang, lang was he mine,  
Lang, lang, but nae mair ;  
I maunna repine,  
But my heart it is sair.

His staff's at the wa',  
Toom, toom is his chair !  
His bannet an' a !  
An' I maun be here !

But O ! he's at rest,  
Why sud I complain ?  
Gin my saul be blest,  
I'll meet him again.

O ! to meet him again  
Whare hearts ne'er are sair ;  
O ! to meet him again  
To part never mair !

Her later life and character, her letters and her charities give us the picture of a consecrated Christian lady, ever full of unselfish desire for the highest interests of those about her, and ready to abound in liberality for the cause of her Master. Before touching lightly on the more prominent remaining facts of her life, let us read the verses of one of her best-known songs, "The Auld Hoose." Her brother had been called out with the militia for service in the North of England in 1797, when the revolutionaries of France threatened to gain a footing in Great Britain. Hither to Durham Carolina had gone with her brother. On her return to Gask, in 1802, she found that "The Auld Hoose" had been pulled down and had given place to the new mansion which now stands at Gask. Of "The Auld House" nothing remains but the southern wall, left to mark the site, which bears the date 1626, has the arms of Lord Oliphant and Lady Drummond, and looks





THE "AULD HOOSE" OF GASK.

along seven different ways. The song "The Auld Hoose" seems to have been written after 1820, from the reference in the fifth verse to the death of one of Lady Nairne's nieces. The venerated chief of Strowan, Duncan Robertson, had insisted that he should bear the family Bible to the new house, and just when he had passed the threshold, the house door burst its hinges and fell, and he narrowly escaped.

Oh, the auld hoose, the auld hoose,  
What tho' the rooms were wee !  
Oh ! kind hearts were dwelling there,  
And bairnies fu' o' glee ;  
The wild rose and the jessamine  
Still hang upon the wa',  
How mony cherish'd memories  
Do they, sweet flowers, reca' !

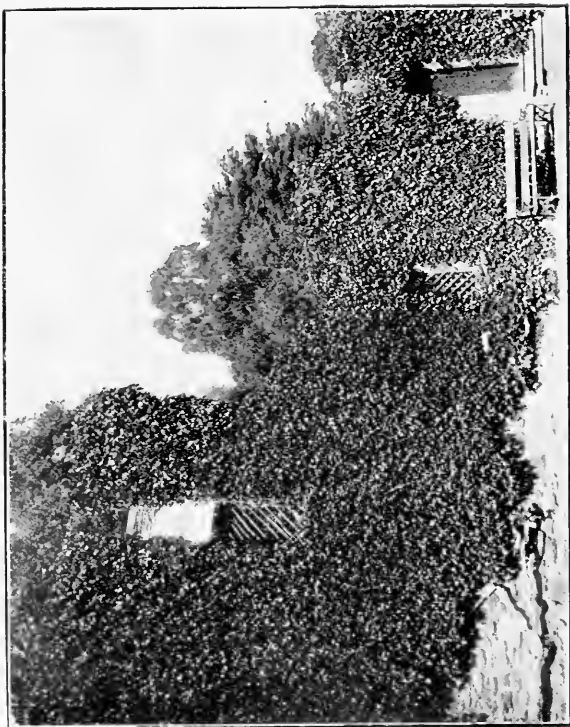
O, the auld laird, the auld laird,  
Sae canty, kind, and crouse,  
How mony did he welcome to  
His ain wee dear auld house !

And the leddy too, sae genty,  
There shelter'd Scotland's heir,  
And clipt a lock wi' her ain hand  
Frae his lang yellow hair.

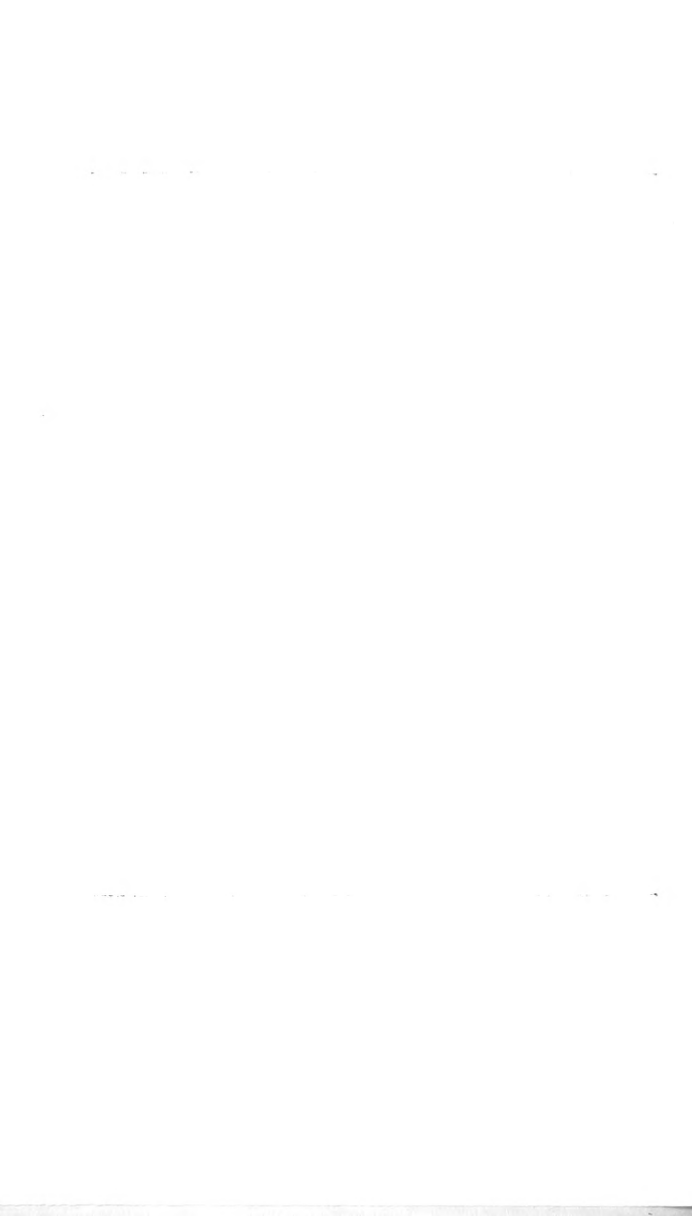
The mavis still doth sweetly sing,  
The bluebells sweetly blaw,  
The bonnie Earn's clear winding still,  
But the auld house is awa'.  
The auld house, the auld house,  
Deserted tho' ye be,  
There ne'er can be a new house  
Will seem sae fair to me.

Still flourishing the auld pear tree,  
The bairnies liked to see,  
And oh, how often did they speir  
When ripe they a' wad be!  
The voices sweet, the wee bit feet  
Aye rinnin' here and there,  
The merry shout—oh! whiles we greet  
To think we'll hear nae mair!

For they are a' wide scatter'd now,  
Some to the Indies gane,  
And ane, alas! to her lang hame;  
Not here we'll meet again.



THE "AULD HOUSE" OF GASK.



The kirkyaird, the kirkyaird !  
Wi' flowers o' every hue,  
Shelter'd by the holly's shade  
An' the dark sombre yew.

The setting sun, the setting sun,  
How glorious it gaed doon !  
The cloudy splendour raised our hearts  
To cloudless skies aboon !  
The auld dial, the auld dial,  
It tauld how time did pass ;  
The wintry winds hae dung it doon,  
Noo hid 'mang weeds and grass.

Another strain that lingers over the past is "Auld Lang Syne"—here published, we believe, for the first time. The original MS. now before us, bears, in the handwriting of Miss Steuart, of Dalguise, the heading—"Autograph by my Aunt Nairne."—M. H. S., *i.e.*, Margaret Harriet Steuart.

On the 2nd June, 1806, Carolina Oliphant was married in the new house of Gask to her second cousin, Major Nairne (afterwards Lord

Nairne), a man of wit and humour, while he was Assistant Inspector General of barracks. With a rare and loving devotion to her cousin, Captain Nairne, she had pledged herself to wait for his promotion, and now many years after the troth was plighted, they were married in the new house of Gask. The bride was in her forty-first year, and the bridegroom nine years older, but love held them leal and true to one another and made the union an ever deepening happiness to them both. Major Nairne, on account of his work, had to live in Edinburgh, and their home was first at Caroline Cottage, Portobello, then at a villa at Duddingston, purchased for his nephew and granddaughter by the Strowan Chieftain. Miss Steuart of Dalguise, has left it on record that the Nairnes lived for several years in Edinburgh, at Hope Street, and at 43 Queen Street. Later, they seem to have had a temporary residence at Holyrood Palace. Miss Steuart speaks of visiting them there,



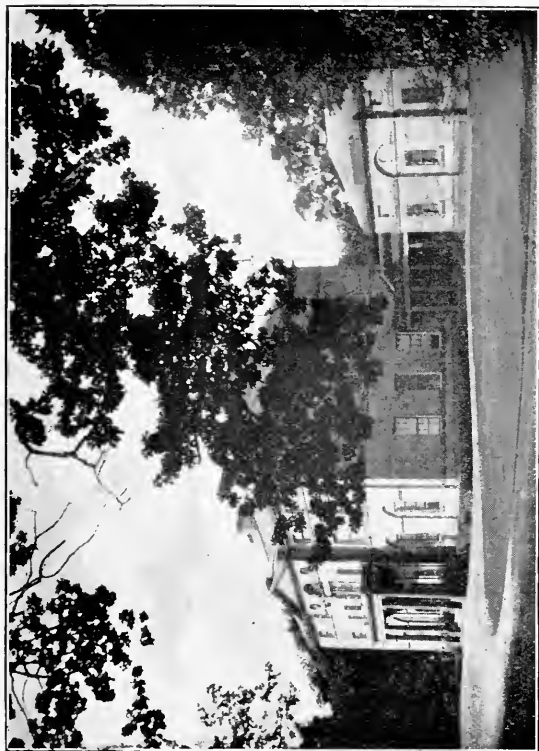
LORD NAIRNE.



and in her interesting reminiscences written when ninety-seven years old, at the request of her cousin, Mrs. Simpson, we have the following graphic sketch of the rooms at Holyrood : —“The side of the square was gloomy, but the windows of the living rooms all looked to the Park and Arthur's Seat. The chambers were hung with very fine old tapestry whereon were depicted immense human forms with the heads of toads. One of these chambers was my bedroom when I visited the Palace, and I confess to my eerie sensations as I looked at them. The whole royal apartments were done up and beautified for the King ; and to the very great amusement of my young cousin, the throne was placed where the cook's bed had stood.”

In 1808, their only child, a son, was born, named William Murray. Through her friend, Mrs. Campbell Colquhoun, wife of the Lord Advocate, a daughter of the Erskines of Muthill, she was introduced to Sir Walter

Scott, to whom the history of the Oliphant family was well known, and who has perhaps, as we might expect, reproduced their characters and doughty deeds in some of his heroes. The Strathearn songstress and Sir Walter may have met often at Ravelston House, the seat of Mr. Alexander Keith, a grand-uncle of Sir Walter, and who afterwards married Lady Nairne's younger sister, but Lady Nairne's modesty led her to shrink from publicity and notoriety. Ravelston House was well known and dear to Scott, for it seems to have furnished his imagination with the original of Tullyveolan in *Waverley*, yet, as Professor Masson remarks, the name of Lady Nairne is not mentioned once in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, among the many allusions to the people of interest and renown in the Edinburgh of that day. Anne Grant of Laggan, Elizabeth Hamilton, and Joanna Baillie were living not far off, but these gifted women knew not that among them was one



THE NEW HOUSE OF GASK.



who perhaps deserved the highest place in the group. Among her acquaintances, however, were the daughters of Baron Hume, who were the means of bringing her songs under the notice of Mr. Purdie, the music publisher, when he proposed to bring out a collection of Scottish airs with suitable words. Lady Nairne assumed a *nom de plume*, Mrs. Bogan of Bogan, wrote a feigned hand, signing her MSS. with the initials "B. B." or "S. M." (Scottish Minstrel), and when she ventured on a personal interview with Mr. Purdie it was under the guise of a country lady of a former generation, so that the worthy publisher was not even aware that the gifted song writer resided in Edinburgh. This is corroborated by Miss Steuart. The following letter from Mr. Purdie addressed to the unknown Mrs. Bogan of Bogan, concerning "The Lammie," will be read with interest. We are able to publish, for the first time, a fac-simile of this song.

83 Princes Street,  
Monday, 5th April.

MADAM,

I beg leave to send you a copy of "The Lammie," which is just finished, my reason for sending it to you instead of Miss Corbett as you desired, is in consequence of the accompaniment being so much altered by Mr. Dun, or indeed totally altered, the accompaniment you gave me being so very incorrect.

I also beg to enclose a note I had from Mr. Dun regarding the Title, and if it meets the Author's approbation, I should like the word children left out, as it gives the idea of something so trifling. The song is really pretty, and will be sung by grown-up people with much pleasure. Besides this, Mr. Dun says (for I have seen him this evening), that the first part is too low set for children. As he offers his name as having put the accompaniment, this will be in favor of the sale, but this is only if quite agreeable to the ladies, and

I am respectfully,

Madam,

Your obliged Servt.,

ROB. PURDIE.

The editors of *The Scottish Minstrel*, published in 1824 by Mr. Robert Purdie, Edinburgh, say, "They would have felt happy in being permitted to enumerate the many original and beautiful verses that adorn their pages for which they are indebted to the author of the much-admired song, "The Land o' the Leal," but they fear to wound a delicacy that shrinks from all observation." Even her husband was not entrusted with her secret, for she would spread a newspaper over her manuscripts when he came into the room where she was writing.

To Miss Helen Walker, she confided the secret of her authorship of "The Land o' the Leal," adding with a smile, "I have not even told Nairne lest he blab." The following letter from Lady Nairne to Miss Walker, relating to a volume of *The Scottish Minstrel*, is of interest for its expression of her views about serious songs, and her references to the Covenanters and to her own song, "John Tod":—

24th May.

DEAR MISS HELEN,

It was only yesterday I observed that I have not got the first Vol. of the *Minstrel*—so that I can do nothing with the “Briar Bush,” which is, I suppose, in it. I have two copies of the 6th Vol., and will send you one of them first opportunity—with my old song of “Here’s to them, etc.,” and an ancient little air which I think might suit the Martyrs’ grave, if it is not already in the collection with other words. I know I have not heard it for about half a century, and have not the music except in my own mind—as far as I know at least. The old words began, “As I gaed forth to tak the air;” the burden was “Nae dominies for me, laddie.” They are not worth preserving. *Some* change in the words of the Martyr would be necessary, I think—to suit the time. Are there no names but Renwick and Cargill that you wish introduced. I do not know much of them upon the whole, tho’ I never can think the Covenanters always acted upon Scriptural principles—“there was so much right feeling and heroism amongst

them that they merit a place in Scottish song." I cannot make anything of the air now pub<sup>d</sup>. I have been looking into Wolfe's remains, and was pleased to find his ideas as to the infusion of religious principle or rather feeling, so like my own, tho' what he says rather discourages my own last thought—which was the plan of a separate Vol. for serious songs—upon consideration that might prove only an indulgence to those whose minds are already pointing upwards, whilst the insinuation, as he says, or gleam of religious feeling, which takes them by surprise, might be of use to the worldly. Could not Dr. A. Thoms<sup>n</sup> be opined in a thing of this kind, he is so musical? I would like to have his attention called to the importance of songs in general, having heard a lady lament that his children were allowed to sing words not altogether edifying to the hearers or singers. As for John Tod, I think the verse beginning "Saw ye little John, etc.," should be omitted; it belongs to a different set of words—and alludes to a *boy*—and the good shoes hardly suit the tatters which are picturesque upon the whole. I hope you are keeping

in view to have a separate vignette for each Vol., which would, I do think, make the work more attractive, if you send me the outline of any, I will endeavour to have them revised. I hear of a person coming to Edinburgh within a few minutes, and he will take this to the Post-Office.

Yours ever and truly,

C. NAIRNE.

Again in the following letter to Miss Walker, she refers to a song supposed to be "Murray's Ha'," in which she sings of the hospitality of Murray's Hall, and celebrates the valour of Thomas Graham of Balgowan, the hero of Barossa, afterwards Lord Lyndoch, who figures in many a stirring song.

Monday.

MY DEAR MISS HELEN,

There is room for amendment here. If it pass—it shows what stuff a song may be made of. I am sorry your friend is to be so long of coming this way. If you are to pay

your long intended visit at Louisfield, and name the day, I dare say we could transport you. Lord Nairne does not so often use the horses as I wish. Yours, in haste—fear the said song is not very legible.

C. N.

Her accomplishments were many and great. She was excellent at the needle, her drawing-room furniture was adorned with her embroidery, and she was most ready with the pencil and the brush. She devoted herself to the education of her son, the last of the Lords Nairne. The years sped on during which she was, in her own words, “a too happy wife and mother.” In 1822, on the occasion of a royal visit of George IV. to Holyrood, the King was approached with a petition, drawn up by Sir Walter Scott, praying him to restore the lost titles to attainted nobles. This was done by Act of Parliament in 1824. Major Nairne was restored to his rank in the peerage, and our authoress became Baroness Nairne. In

1830, after a period of ill health, Lord Nairne died, and on account of her son's health, Lady Nairne resolved to leave Edinburgh. On her departure she wrote her well known "Farewell to Edinburgh," in which she breathes a tender and lingering farewell to the beautiful home of her married life, and with deft and loving hand traces the many interesting features of "Auld Reekie."

Fareweel, Edinburgh, where happy we hae been,  
Fareweel, Edinburgh, Caledonia's Queen !

Auld Reekie, fare-ye-weel, and Reekie New  
beside,

Ye're like a chieftain grim and gray, wi' a young  
bonny bride.

Fareweel, Edinburgh, and your trusty Volunteers,  
Your Council a' sae circumspect, your Provost  
without peers,

Your stately College stuff'd wi' lear, your rantin'  
High-Schule yard ;

The jib, the lick, the roguish trick, the ghaists o'  
th' auld toun-guard.

Fareweel, Edinburgh, your philosophic men ;  
Your scribes that set you a' to richts, and wield  
the golden pen ;  
The Session-Court, your thrang resort, bigwigs  
and lang gowns a' ;  
And if ye dinna keep the peace, it's no for want  
o' law.  
Fareweel, Edinburgh, and a' your glittering  
wealth ;  
Your Bernard's Well, your Calton Hill, where  
every breeze is health ;  
An' spite o' a' your fresh sea-gales, should ony  
chance to dee,  
It's no for want o' recipe, the doctor, or the fee.

Fareweel, Edinburgh, your hospitals and ha's,  
The rich man's friend, the Cross lang ken'd, auld  
Ports, and City wa's ;  
The Kirks that grace their honoured place, now  
peacefu' as they stand,  
Where'er they're found, on Scottish ground, the  
bulwarks of the land.  
Fareweel, Edinburgh, your sons o' genius fine,  
That send your name on wings o' fame beyond  
the burnin' line ;

A name that's stood maist since the flood, and  
just when it's forgot,  
Your bard will be forgotten too, your ain Sir  
Walter Scott.

Fareweel, Edinburgh, and all your daughters  
fair ;  
Your Palace in the sheltered glen, your Castle in  
the air ;  
Your rocky brows, your grassy knowes, and eke  
your mountain bauld ;  
Were I to tell your beauties a', my tale wad  
ne'er be tauld ;  
Now, fareweel, Edinburgh, where happy we hae  
been ;  
Fareweel, Edinburgh, Caledonia's Queen !  
Prosperity to Edinburgh wi' every risin' sun,  
And blessings be on Edinburgh till time his race  
has run !

The widow and her son went first to  
the south of England, thence to Ireland,  
where her husband was born, setting up house  
at Kingston near Dublin, and then at Ennis-  
kerry. Her impressions of Ireland and its

people are conveyed to us in the spirited song, "Wake, Irishmen, wake !" which we read with strange interest in the light of all that has come and gone in the troubled history of "the Emerald Isle " during the past seventy years.

Wake, Irishmen, wake, let your slumbers be over,  
Our children will look to our day when we're  
gone,  
The clouds and thick darkness now o'er us may  
hover,  
The sun will yet shine on fair Erin !

Strong is the arm that is stretched out to save us,  
High is the rock where our confidence rests,  
It is not in man, with his worst threats, to brave  
us,  
Then Irishmen, wake! let your slumbers be over,  
Our children will look to our day when we're  
gone,  
Tho' clouds and thick darkness now o'er us may  
hover,  
The sun will yet shine on fair Erin !

What will numbers avail, when their strength is  
departed ?

The bread sent from Heaven, they trample it  
down ;

Our birthright—our portion—yet dark and cold-  
hearted

They starve the poor sons of fair Erin.

Shall Irishmen, bold as the king of the forest,

And free as the eagle that soars in the sky—

Black slavery abhorring—bow down to the *sorest* ?

No—sons of old Ireland, too long kept in blind-  
ness,

High Heaven itself send glad tidings to you ;

Claim your Bibles, you'll find them all love and  
all kindness,

The joy and the peace of fair Erin !

We love you as men—and as brothers we love  
you,

Our hearts long to free you from Popery's hard  
chain ;

For the sake of your undying souls, we would  
move you,

To know the *true* friends of fair Erin.

Come better, come worse, we will never surren-  
der,

For the cause that our forefathers stood we  
will stand ;

To the last drop of blood our own Isle we'll  
defend her.

Then Irishmen, rise ! let your slumbers be over ;  
Our children will look to our day when we're  
gone ;

Tho' clouds and thick darkness now o'er us may  
hover,

The sun will yet shine on fair Erin.

At Powerscourt House she met Edward Irving, but her impression of the saintly preacher is not given.

For three years she travelled with her son, her widowed sister Mrs. Keith, and her niece, Miss Steuart, on the Continent.

In the winter of 1837, the youthful Lord Nairne caught influenza and pneumonia, and died at Brussels in his thirtieth year. She bore the blow with perfect "resignation to the holy will of Him who is our all." Some

weeks after, in a fine spirit, she wrote to Mrs. Stewart Sandeman: "Whilst I had him the thought that it was a thing *possible* that I might lose him, though high in health and spirits—the very thought would at times embitter to me our delightful intercourse. This I know arose from excess of attachment, and surely I have now much reason to give thanks for the grace that enabled me to resign him at last with the full conviction that all was well for him and for me." From the pen of Mrs. G. F. Barbour, then a girl of fifteen, the grand-niece of Lady Nairne, and who travelled with her aunt on the Continent for two years, we have a beautiful narrative of many interesting events of this time. "Her own song," writes Mrs. Barbour, thirty-two years later, "which had made clear the gates of the heavenly home to so many was now to do so for herself." To the authoress of *The Way Home*, the famed song of her grand-aunt must have been specially dear. And now

she who thus wrote of it has herself entered "The Land o' the Leal," and her mother, Mrs. Stewart Sandeman, her husband and her son before her. They were worthy relatives of Lady Nairne in intellectual and spiritual power, and like her distinguished for their warm intensity of nature, their enthusiasm, and their unwearied interest in souls.

The beautiful lines of Miss Fry, quoted by Lady Nairne to her grand-niece, are of interest as descriptive of herself. The poem is called "The Barren Rock," and describes the rock standing bare, yet firm and strong, while the billows of adversity break over it and leave it—

"To rise in smiles as the waves withdraw,  
And its brow is decked with gems so bright  
They seem like drops of the rainbow's light."

Then says Miss Fry :—

"'Tis well ; and so o'er some beside  
Adversity flows with as rough a tide ;  
It rifles the heart of the joys it bore,  
And it comes so oft they will grow no more ;

But it leaves it firm, it leaves it bright,  
It leaves it decked with unearthly light ;  
In hallowed tears serene to stand  
As the lonely rock on the cold sea strand."

Nor had her humour forsaken the saintly old lady, as shown in the story of how her Aunt had been summoned to Athole to see her relative who was ill, and a message had been sent to Perth for a large chaise—the biggest that could be got—to convey Aunt Harriet to Blair Athole.

"We were all," said Lady Nairne, "seated in grief round Aunt Harriet waiting for the chaise, when the door suddenly opened and two men appeared carrying an enormous cheese! Aunt Harriet was convulsed in laughter, and for laughing could not explain, and there stood the two men with the cheese and we gazing in utter wonder." She had written it *chease*, the old way of spelling. The journey was given up till next morning.

Lady Nairne's charity and liberality, so

quietly bestowed, were remarkable. Her modesty in her charity is even more beautiful than in her poetry. "Her coffers," says Mr. Kington-Oliphant, "might have been inscribed with that fine motto which is sometimes seen on hospitals abroad—"*Christo in pauperibus*"—"To Christ in the poor."

"A few days," says Mrs. Barbour, "before the party left Munich, an article appeared in the principal newspaper expressing gratitude for her work among the sick, poor, and ignorant." We find that she was constantly giving sums of money to the utmost of her liberality anonymously. Through her Edinburgh correspondent she gave a sum of £50 to be handed to Dr. Chalmers for support of Gaelic Schools in the Highlands. Dr. Chalmers was the first to make known her Christian liberality. At a meeting in Edinburgh, on behalf of the West Port Mission, on 29th December, 1845, he told how he had received from a lady, who had enjoined the

strictest secrecy, a sum of £300 for the site for Church and Schools to be built in that dark and heathenish part of the city.

“Her nearest heir, for she is now dead,” said the Doctor, “allows me now to mention her name: it is Lady Nairne.” So only after her death did the love that vaunteth not itself make itself known.

Her letters became more and more solicitous for the spiritual well-being of her dear ones.

Her last song, written in her 76th year, at the request of her Edinburgh correspondent, is the well-known “Would ye be young again”—which must have been expressive of the writer’s spirit, and in which the shimmer of the far-off land falls upon her beautiful and unrelenting old age.

Would you be young again?  
So would not I—  
One tear to memory giv’n,  
Onward I’d hie.

---

Life's dark flood forded o'er,  
All but at rest on shore,  
Say, would you plunge once more,  
With home so nigh !

If you might, would you now  
Retrace your way ?  
Wander through thorny wilds,  
Faint and astray ?  
Night's gloomy watches fled,  
Morning all beaming red,  
Hope's smiles around us shed,  
Heavenward—away.

Where are they gone, of yore  
My best delight ?  
Dear and more dear, tho' now  
Hidden from sight.  
Where they rejoice to be,  
There is the land for me ;  
Fly time, fly speedily ;  
Come life and light.

The original, which we here reproduce with  
its pencilled corrections and its added quota-

tion from the hand of the aged songstress, will be scanned with moistened eye.

In the spring of 1843, her nephew, the son and heir of her brother Laurence, with his wife, crossed the Channel and brought Lady Nairne home to Gask, to the old familiar scenes and associations of her childhood and youth. Here truly at evening time there was light, and her latter end was peace.

She was keenly interested in the crisis in the Church of Scotland which issued in the Disruption. From Gask, 24th October, 1843, she writes to her Edinburgh friend:—"I do trust with you that the commotions in the Church of Scotland may tend to the advancement of the Gospel in its purity. I am anxious for the prosperity of the Free Church, and amongst their number pity only those who may have joined from half-way motives. The true disciples will be kept in peace and safety, I have no doubt."

In the self-sacrifice of that time she sym-

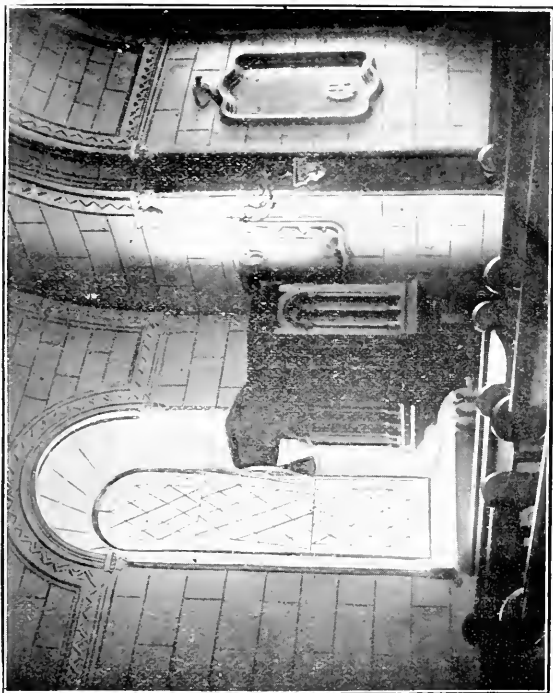
pathised and shared. As we know from a letter to her grand-niece, Mrs. Barbour, she converted into money her family plate, and in her usual unobtrusive way communicated the amount to Dr. Chalmers for the Sustentation Fund of the Free Church of Scotland.

The end came gradually—first a shock of paralysis in December, 1843, after which she rallied and was able to show for two years more her former interest in good works, among others, the religious training of the young. On Saturday, 28th October, 1845, she was wheeled in her chair to the door of the New Chapel, built by her nephew, on the site of the old parish church.

“The place will soon be ready for me,” said Lady Nairne.

On the following day she became breathless, lost power of utterance, but remained conscious, and while Mrs. Oliphant read portions of Scripture, her spirit passed peacefully

away to that land of which she had so often sung, and for which she longed. She died at the age of seventy-nine, on 26th October, 1845. She was buried beside her forefathers in the chapel which stands upon the site of the old Parish Kirk around which is the auld kirkyard, “shelter’d by the holly’s shade and the dark sombre yew,”—among her native woods—while beneath is “The bonny Earn, clear winding still,” and the green rampart of the Ochils. After her death, her sister, Mrs. Keith, published a volume of poems entitled, *Lays of Strathearn*, which had been in preparation with Lady Nairne’s consent. Her name was affixed, for death had removed the necessity for anonymity. It was a thin folio, and the title ran—“Lays from Strathearn, by Caroline, Baroness Nairne, author of ‘The Land o’ the Leal, etc.’ arranged with symphonies and accompaniments for the Piano-forte by Finlay Dun.” The most complete edition since published is that by Dr. Charles



INTERIOR OF CHAPEL, AT GASK HOUSE.



Rogers in 1869. The secret so long hidden from a curious world was at last divulged, but not in time to make it easy to trace all the songs that are rightfully hers, nor to prevent interpolation and change in some of them that are certainly by Lady Nairne.

Thus ended the life of our Scottish Poetess. The genius of her song, and the purity and the sanctity of her life and character are alike admirable, and were probably never conjoined as they are in her. That they are wedded in her, may be to some minds surprising—but what God hath joined let no man put asunder, and let the union show that culture has not over-shot the goal of evangelical truth. The graphic simplicity and naturalness of her songs, their music and rhythm, their humour and pathos, and above all their sunny sweetness and purity of tone, through which there breathes the pure air of heaven, make it true of them as has been said—that they lack death.

And of herself, to know her must have been to love her—to admire her beauty, her talents, her gifts, but still more her graces of generosity, patience, modesty, and charity.

May she encourage us by her life as she has done by her songs, to seek the better country, the Land o' the Leal.





MEMORIAL CROSS TO LADY NAIRNE AT GASK HOUSE.



## FACSIMILES



Off the methelp. Cammie  
Nis imp'd its ain mamme  
We tented it kindly by night & by day  
The bairns made game o' it  
It had a blythe name o' it -  
Its food was the gowan - its music was <sup>in</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>mae</sup> ~~mae~~  
Without tre or fetter  
It couldna bea better  
But it wou'd gae wilep the world to see  
Off the face that it feared not,  
It saw not it heard not  
Was watching, its wandring, from Bonnington <sup>Lee</sup>  
O what then befell it  
'Thene waepin' to tell it,  
To'd Cammie, hae's best in his lang head so sly  
He met the spot Cammie  
That wanted its mamme  
And let its bonnet haume the wide world to try  
We <sup>hous on?</sup> ~~imp'd~~ at day daw in  
We ~~imp'd~~ at night ~~gown~~ -  
It's wee shod, as tenantloaf, under the tree,  
At dusk o' the gleamun  
It wou'd gae a vramun  
It wou'd frolic nae mair upon Bonningtonlee

'The mitherless lammie  
Ne'er missed its ain mammie,  
We tented it kindly by night and by day,  
The bairns made game o't,  
It had a blythe time o't,  
Its food was the gowan—its music was *mai, mai*.

Without tie or fetter  
It couldna been better,  
But it would gae witless the world to see,  
The foe that it feared not,  
It saw not it heard not,  
Was watching its wand'ring from Bonnington lea.

O what then befell it,  
'Twere waefu' to tell it,  
Tod Lawrie kens best wi' his lang head so sly,  
He met the pet lammie  
That wanted its mammie,  
And left its kind hame, the wide world to try.

We miss'd at day daw'in,  
We miss'd at night fa'in,  
Its wee shed is tenantless under the tree,  
At dusk o' the gloamin',  
It would gae a roamin',  
It will frolic nae mair upon Bonnington lea.

Alas - Robin Wair

Would you be young again!  
So would not I -

~~But ~~friends~~ ~~the~~ ~~philosophies~~ ~~now~~~~  
O'er my tear to memory's shrine  
Onward I'd lie -

Life's dark flood fo'rded o'er

All but at rest on shore

1 <sup>then</sup> would you <sup>over</sup> ~~some~~ more

Plunge ~~in~~ <sup>with</sup> again? <sup>little home</sup> So right  
2

If you might - would you now

Retrace your way.

Wander thro' thorny wilds

Faint & astray?

Nights gloomy watches fled

Morning all beaming red

Life's smiles ~~drawn~~ <sup>thru' the</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>spread</sup>

Thence west w'd I ~~fly~~ away

*Air*—"ROBIN ADAIR."

I.

Would you be young again !  
So would not I—  
One tear to memory giv'n  
Onward I'd hie—  
Life's dark flood forded o'er,  
All but at rest on shore,  
Say would you once more plunge ?  
With home so nigh.

II.

If you might would you now,  
Retrace your way—  
Wander through thorny wilds  
Faint and astray ?  
Night's gloomy watches fled,  
Morning all beaming red ;  
Hope's smiles thro' th' ethereal spread,  
Heavenward—away.

Where are <sup>3</sup> they <sup>gone</sup> gone one of you  
your joy & delight!

Dear & more dear the now  
Hidden from sight;

Where they rejoice the  
There is the land I see one -  
Thy time fly speedily -  
~~Make this one home.~~  
Come, life & light

The throat of the dying wretch in the  
dark desert is nothing like the pining  
for voices which have ceased for ever!  
Amos?

III.

Where are they gone once your  
Joy and delight !  
Dear and more dear tho' now  
Hidden from sight ;  
Where they rejoice to be,  
There is the land for me—  
Fly time fly speedily—  
Come life and light.

“The thirst of the dying wretch in the desert  
is nothing to the pining for voices which have  
ceased for ever !”—*Anon.*

Autograph by Mary Abbott Wadsworth  
M.A.S.

The days were bright the nights were sweet  
Kiss & smiles how did they shine!  
Oh every thought can woe to us yet  
O and long gone

Now loved & lost are here again  
A joy & grief combine  
When memory's echoes round bring back  
The friends & long gone

We hear their voices - we see their smiles  
Our hearts around them twine -  
But soon the vision sweet is lost  
O and long gone

What good the passing hours can bring  
May that beyond us shine  
But beams of fancy sweetest rest  
O and long gone

AUTOGRAPH BY MY AUNT NAIRNE.

M. H. S.

[Margaret Harriet Steuart.]

The days were bright, the nights were sweet,  
Hope's smiles how did they shine !  
The very thought can soothe us yet,  
O auld lang syne.

Now loved and lost are here again,  
And joy and grief combine,  
When memory's warlock wand brings back  
The friends o' lang syne.

We hear their voice—we see their smile,  
Our hearts around them twine,  
But soon the vision sweet is lost,  
In auld lang syne.

What good the passing hour can bring,  
May that be yours and mine,  
But beams of fancy sweetest rest,  
On auld lang syne.

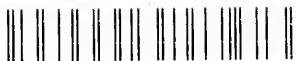


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